> First, Jill was chaos, one confused heap ; Darkness enwrapt the disagreeing deep ; In a mixt crowd the jumbling elements were, Nor earth, nor air, nor heaven did appear ; Till ou this horrid >ast abyss of things, Teeming' Night, spreading o'er her coal-black wings, Laid the first egg ; whence, after time's due course, Issu'd forth Love (the world's prolific source) CHis taring with golden wings ; which fluttering o'er Bark Chaos, gendered all the numerous store Of animals and gods, &c.

And whereas the poet there makes the birds to have been begotten between love and chaos before all the gods; though one might think this to have been done jocularly by him, merely to humour his plot ; yet Salmasius[a] conceives, and not without some reason, that it was really a piece of the old Atheistic cabala, which therefore seems to have run thus: That chaos or matter confusedly moved being the first original of all, things did from thence rise up gradually from lesser to greater perfection. First, inanimate things, as" the elements, heaven, earth, and seas ; then brute animals ; afterwards men, and last of all the god$. As if not only the substance of matter, and those inanimate bodies of the elements, fire, water, air, and earth, were, as Aristotle somewhere speaks, according to the sense of those Atheistic

theologers, *^vcm *wp&rspa* TOU $€ov, Oeot St *KOI* Cor. lib. *«L* c.

, first in order of nature before God, as being themselves also gods,— hut also brute animals at least, if not men too. And this Is the Atheistic creation of the world, gods and all, out of senseless and stupid matter, ,or dark chaw, as the only original Numen; the perfectly inverted order of the universe.

[a] Exercitat Flinian. in Sotaam, torn. i. p. 309,